

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /073 W
-----021883 042348Z /66

O 042317Z MAY 78 ZFF-4

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7229
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MPOL, SF, WA, AO
SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN AIRBORNE ATTACK ON ANGOLA

REF: CAPE TOWN 897 (NOTAL),

1. SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENSE MINISTER ISSUED A STATEMENT AT 2300
LOCAL MAY 4 ANNOUNCING THAT, AS A RESULT OF SWAPO BUILDUP IN
SOUTHERN ANGOLA, INTIMIDATION AND MURDER IN NAMIBIA, AND RECENT
BORDER VIOLATIONS, "A LIMITED MILITARY OPERATION AGAINST
SWAPO FORCES HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT OVER THE BORDER." MINISTER'S
STATEMENT GAVE NO DETAILS OF THE OPERATION, BUT SAG HAS,
ACCORDING TO OUR MEDIA CONTACTS, AUTHORIZED PUBLICATION OF
ANGOP REPORT MONITORED IN LISBON AND A REUTERS NEWS STORY
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THAT AN ATTACK WAS LAUNCHED AGAINST CACINGA (OR CASSINGA),
APPARENTLY NEAR SA DA BANDIERA, AT 0600, MAY 4. WE HAVE NOT
YET SEEN THOSE REPORTS, BUT ACCORDING TO OUR MEDIA SOURCES,
ANGOP STATED THAT, FOLLOWING HEAVY BOMBING ATTACK, "WAVES
OF TROOPS" WERE LANDED AT NAMIBIAN REFUGEE CAMP POPULATED BY
HUNDREDS OF CIVILIANS, MAINLY OLD MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN.
REUTERS STORY REPORTEDLY REFERS TO "WAVES OF PLANES" AND

PARATROOPERS. NO INDICATION WHETHER THE OPERATION IS STILL IN PROGRESS. ASIDE FROM THE MINISTER'S STATEMENT, SAG AUTHORITIES ARE SAYING NOTHING.

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF DEFENSE MINISTER'S STATEMENT:

QUOTE: "AS A RESULT OF THE OMINOUS BUILDUP OF SWAPO FORCES IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA AND THE EXTENSIVE CAMPAIGN OF INTIMIDATION OF THE LOCAL INHABITANTS AND THE MURDER OF POLITICAL LEADERS IN SOUTH WEST AFRICA, AS WELL AS THE LARGE NUMBER OF BORDER VIOLATIONS DURING THE PAST FEW WEEKS, A LIMITED MILITARY OPERATION AGAINST SWAPO FORCES HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT OVER THE BORDER. THE LIMITED OPERATION WAS EMBARKED ON AFTER LARGE NUMBERS OF HEAVILY ARMED SWAPO TERRORISTS RECENTLY CROSSED THE BORDER, ATTACKED OUR FORCES IN OVAMBO AND FLED BACK TO SAFETY IN ANGOLA. THE RUACANA POWER STATION WAS ALSO FIRED ON AND THE BUILDING EXTENSIVELY DAMAGED. AFTER THE ATTACK, THE LATEST SINCE SWAPO INTENSIFIED ITS HOSTILITIES, WE WERE FORCED TO RESORT TO FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS. I TRUST THE LIMITED OPERATION WILL LEAVE THOSE WHO WISH TO THREATEN US UNDER NO ILLUSIONS. WE HAVE ALREADY LEANED OVER BACKWARDS TO SEEK THE SOLUTION ALONG OTHER LINES AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO IN THE INTERESTS OF PEACE IN THIS SUBCONTINENT. BUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT CAN NO LONGER ALLOW WITH SELF RESPECT EMERGENCY CALLS FROM PEACEFUL LEADERS TO REMAIN UNANSWERED. WE HAVE A MORAL DUTY TOWARDS THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA AND CANNOT SIT SILENTLY AND WITH FOLDED HANDS AND SEE HOW PEACEFUL CITIZENS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND LEADERS OF THIS REMOTE AREA ARE MURDERED, ASSAULTED, KIDNAPPED AND THREATENED AND INTIMIDATED BY OTHER METHODS OF TERRORISM. I HAVE IN THE PAST WHILE REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT MILITARY BASES WILL NOT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO TERRORISTS IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA, BUT THIS APPARENTLY HAS FALLEN ON DEAF EARS. END QUOTE.
NELSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, PRESS RELEASES, AIR COMBAT OPERATIONS, INVASIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CAPET00898
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780191-0469
Format: TEL
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780594/aaaadckx.tel
Line Count: 101
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e3ef98a4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 CAPE TOWN 897
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2796569
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH AFRICAN AIRBORNE ATTACK ON ANGOLA
TAGS: MPOL, PBOR, SOPN, MOPS, SF, WA, AO
To: STATE USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e3ef98a4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014